

The Book of Tobit



Anonymous

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Introduction

The Book of Tobit has been excluded from practically all Bibles we find today. Why is that? Is it that the book was forged? Was the book not from antiquity? Does it not portray an historical person? Does it not portray historical events? Does it not portray those who have dedicated their lives to the Supreme Being?

Let's take a look at these possible reasons and try to figure out why Tobit was excluded.

The Book of Tobit was written thousands of years ago by an unknown author, presumably a follower or descendent of Tobit. The Book of Tobit documents part of the life of two devoted persons, Tobit and Tobin and their relatives and followers. It also documents the appearance of an angel, Raphael.

The book also documents a period of history during a time when the city of Nineve was under threat of destruction, through the activities of some of its citizens.

It also discusses the healing of the blindness of Tobit, as directed by the angel to Tobit's son Tobin. Along with this, the book details the marriage of Tobin despite challenging circumstances, and how their dedication to God brought them through these challenges.

These events place the Book of Tobit in the 8th Century B.C. Some scholars, however, have dated the writing of the Book of Tobit to the 3rd Century B.C.

While the early Catholic and Orthodox churches accepted the Book of Tobit as canonical – meaning it was accepted as an authorized scriptural text – it was never added to the Bible. So it was excluded from the Bible but not rejected by the Church Fathers, such as Augustine.

However, the Protestant churches did not accept the text as part of its Canon. They declared the Book of Tobit as apocrypha. This means, curiously, that though the Protestants accepted practically every other Bible book accepted as Canon, they didn't accept this one – along with a handful of others. Such a situation is referred to in Bible scholarship as deuterocanonical. Accepted by the Fathers and the Early Church, but not by later Protestants.

Early Jewish scholars also did not include the Book of Tobit in their canonical library of texts. But they did classify it as an important part of the scriptures, just as the early Church did.

Nonetheless, even Martin Luther accepted the Book of Tobit as scripture. Luther's opinion was that even if it was fictional, it should be read as a devotional work. He stated that even if it was "all made up, then it is indeed a very beautiful, wholesome and useful fiction or drama by a gifted poet" and that "this book is useful and good for us Christians to read."

Furthermore, the first Methodist 'Sunday Service of the Methodists' uses verses from the Book of Tobit in its Eucharist. Indeed, Lutheran Churches and Anglican Churches often quote from the Book of Tobit.

As alluded to by Luther, the dating of the Book of Tobit to the 2nd or 3rd Centuries B.C. has led to the suggestion that the work is fictional. However, there is little evidence to confirm this. There is an abundance of context and events within the text to affirm that Tobit was a historical person and his family and followers were also historical. The question becomes: Why would someone create a fictional person and family to document the details of this story? It would seem that a fictional story would have a greater level of magnitude at least.

Rather, Tobit and his family are hard-working and humbly devoted persons living within a time of historical significance. Making up such a story begs relevance.

The reality is that many scriptural scrolls were written and copied over several centuries, especially from the 6th and 7th Centuries, when many of the scrolls were collected and assembled into the Torah.

This means that the 3rd Century opinion could well be based upon a copy of an earlier scroll that was later damaged or lost.

The book of Tobit also describes a type of humble dedication to the Supreme Being, without the need for grandeur or popularity. A dedication that is based on love and humility, and love for others.

Indeed, if we compare the prayers of Tobit to some of the prayers of Samuel and David, we find comparable terms and devotion to God. If this were made up it would be simply amazing.

Nonetheless, the Book of Tobit was not a part of the Bible, nor part of the Torah.

With this in mind, let's take a look at the history of the Torah, and then what we now consider the Bible.

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The written Torah was put together during the 6th Century. This is when the theretofore orally communicated תורה שבעל פה (Torah Shebe'al Peh - "Torah that is spoken") was seemingly transcribed into Torah Shebichtav תורה שבכתב (Torah Shebichtav - "Torah that is written").

The five books of the Torah - which Genesis, "Bereshit" was the first - were eventually combined into a single "Hebrew Bible" now called the Tanakh.

The reality is there was a myriad of oral and written teachings that had been circulating prior to the Torah. There were multiple lineages and schools that had developed by the 6th Century BCE. And each wanted their input into any overarching text.

It is important to distinguish these parts of the texts from the devotional teachings that had been handed down orally for centuries through this teachings lineage prior to being put to writing in the 6th Century BCE.

It has been claimed that the Torah was first written by Moses. But this is not completely supported by the empirical record. Rather, what Moses appears to have written down equates to the Ten Commandments. They were apparently written onto stone tablets that were placed beside the Ark of the Covenant.

Other critical lessons now contained in the scriptures were orally taught by Moses, which were eventually passed on by Joshua, one of Moses' students.

The reality is that much of the Torah scrolls were put into written form just during and just following a period when Judean tribes were forced into exile in Babylon between 586 and 538 BCE. These events along with other struggles for control over lands with Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans, led to the strong incentives for suggesting that God granted certain lands to those within a certain ancestry.

This leads to the understanding that including certain texts into the Torah became a political tool to invest the interests of differing tribes and schools during a time when there was a struggle for legitimacy and survival among competing factions.

This competition for inclusion means that the interests of those scrolls that did not have a seat at the negotiating table during the inclusion decisions were left out of the process. This would perfectly describe Tobit and his following, who had not accumulated a strong

The bottom line is that despite its formatting as a single text, scholars have confirmed that the Bible is not really a book. Rather, it is a compilation of books that were included due to the strength of those particular Tribes of Israel and their followings and armies.

Indeed, many parts of the scrolls included in the Torah are a collection of oral teachings from multiple lineages that passed down their teachings from one generation to the next for many centuries. But as these various teachings were combined, there were many additions as well. These covered the range, from patching the works together to adding new literal statements and making commentary as mentioned.

This view has become widely accepted by scholars over the past two centuries. The texts themselves illustrate that the books of the Torah were written well after Moses had passed.

We can, for example, consider Genesis 12:6 and others that indicate a recording of critical elements of the Torah centuries after the events were taught, centuries after Moses' lifetime.

The consensus of scholars has been that the Torah was combined from at least four main sources and before being redacted into a single version. The sources have been described as Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly writers.

This Documentary hypothesis states the Yahwist source comes from Southern Judah, the Elohist source from Northern Israel, the Deuteronomist from Jerusalem and the Priestly source from Babylon. This Documentary hypothesis holds that the texts had individual lineages, each accompanied by manuscripts that were pieced together to form what is referred to as the Torah.

Others believe there were many other sources. Recent scholars contend that Genesis alone is the compilation of no less than nineteen different manuscripts – many disconnected with each other.

This understanding gradually came about as the Torah texts themselves were analyzed, and three commanding theories of its composition rose to the forefront by scholars:

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- The Documentary: The Torah was a compilation of separate and complete written manuscripts.

- The Supplementary: An original work that was later supplemented with various additions and deletions.

- The Fragmentary: The Torah is a compilation of fragments of different teachings and scrolls.

These views, taken from the evidence of the texts themselves, have offered rational explanations for the various duplications, schisms and irregularities present among the texts of the Torah in terms of timeline, context, history, and language.

Some more recent scholars have contended that the evidence presents that the Torah is a combination of all three – it contains some complete manuscripts; was supplemented with additions and deletions; and also contains various fragments of other manuscripts.

The essence here is that practically every Biblical scholar accepts that the books of the Torah is a compilation of a variety of collected manuscripts and fragments that were transcribed, and after negotiations between the Tribes of Judah and the Tribes of what is now considered Southern Israel, they were mashed together and presented as a single document. This followed with later additions and deletions as the document was further transcribed over the next couple of centuries.

In addition, these transcriptions were subjected to literary manipulation by 6th Century scribes to appease the Persians, and those in positions of authority who sought to maintain their authority and land ownership following the Israelites having been exiled from their territories by the Babylonians.

This manipulation resulted in, among other things, the claim that Abraham's family had been awarded certain Middle Eastern lands by God. It also meant defining a priestly order based upon ancestry instead of teaching lineage as had been the practice for thousands of years, following the teaching succession of Moses by Joshua, who was not a family member.

Defining a priestly class and a landowner class was also a requirement of the Persians' release of the Israelites, who were exiled by the Babylonians after they conquered Judea.

The Persians, who were victorious over the Babylonians, gave the Israelites their freedom to return to their homeland.

Before their release, the Persians wanted the Israelites to show they could govern themselves and provide some written law.

This provided at least some of the motivation for the recording of at least some of the Torah. The Israelites provided a historical basis for many of the rules and rituals that were practiced at the time by the Israelites. These included burnt offerings, circumcision and of course the Ten Commandments.

The oral teachings of the Torah, which include teachings now making up Genesis, were thus incorporated with certain legends and myths that provided substantiation for the adoption of primary rituals and land rights.

During this passage of the oral information over the centuries, according to the time, circumstance and society, naturally much of the Hebrew teachings assumed an allegorical quality. This allegorical quality conferred moral and devotional lessons upon the audience as it was passed on from generation to generation.

This oral tradition was a possible reason the written version of the Book of Tobit was not readily available until the 3rd Century B.C.

At the same time, some of these oral teachings also accommodated many societal issues prevalent during those times. Of prime importance was the feudal tribal nature of nomadic Judean tribes, who suffered from forced displacement and warfare from place to place. These tribes valued the ability to control certain territorial lands, as this was vital to their survival.

As a result we find in transcriptions of these texts included awkward verses of granting certain lands, ostensibly by the Supreme Being. As if the Almighty Creator and Supreme God would need to repeatedly make appearances to Abraham, Jacob and other family members in order to reiterate that God had exclusively given their family practically all the lands of the Middle East in perpetuity?

We can factually prove a literal interpretation of such verses false. First by the reality that much of those lands are now owned by a myriad of other governmental agencies and private parties other than Abraham's family.

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If God truly granted these lands to Abraham and his family in perpetuity, this would suggest that God wasn't able to guarantee the family's continued ownership. This would imply that God wasn't really in control of the lands as promised by those verses. Such an implication would negate the entire thesis of Genesis and the other Books of the Bible regarding the omniscience of God.

Or it would indicate that those verses themselves were manipulated by those who sought to use scripture to underwrite control over certain lands to certain people.

When taken in totality, we find many verses in Genesis and other parts of the Torah allowed scribes authorized by tribal lords to convey political authority and dominance for their particular tribe and leaders.

It must be remembered that those scribes that put these texts into writing performed their work under the supervision and employment of their tribal leaders. This naturally led to a powerful Temple institution that flexed control over the region in the centuries after the Persians allowed the Israelites to return to their homeland.

This resulting Temple institution grew stronger and more fanatical over the centuries, until the Romans conquered them.

Following the persecution of Jesus and the century-long Jewish-Roman Wars, the Roman government dominated Judea with an iron fist. The Temple institution no longer had governmental authority, but they still flexed their power over the people through the Temple system.

After the Jewish-Roman wars, the Romans sought to erase the Jewish religious system by amalgamating the Jewish texts into a neo-Christian philosophy.

As a result, during the Fourth Century A.D., the Roman Emperor Constantine contracted with Eusebius to have selected books from the Judean scriptures combined with selected Christian texts to form what would become the first Bible.

To summarize this complicated process, Eusebius' work to assemble the first Bible was driven by a desire to organize and control the religious nature of the people within what was then

known as the Roman Empire, into one cohesive religion that could be controlled from Rome.

Following Constantine's order, Eusebius hired professional translators and transcribers who oversaw the translation (and thus interpretation) of varying texts from Greek, Arabic and Hebrew languages, into Latin. This Latin translation provided the foundation for the future interpretation of the Bible, which was translated into English many centuries later.

The Book of Genesis was arranged into the first book of this commissioned manuscript now called the Bible, inferring the literal creation history.

After the early Bible's manuscripts were selected, translated into Latin and assembled into the Bible, the Roman Empire and its surrogate Church systematically burned and destroyed any library that included books outside of those selected for the Bible or otherwise were "approved" by Church fathers. Some were quarantined within the Church's library in Rome; others were burnt, never to be found.

The Church also systematically squelched any alternative interpretations of Genesis and the creation, such as those that were taught amongst the Gnostics for centuries.

The Gnostics were practically driven out of existence. Their villages were burnt, their teachers were murdered, and their libraries of manuscripts were destroyed. This activity - of forcibly removing 'heretics' for their alternative interpretations of scripture - continued for over a thousand years among the Church and its proxies.

As far as the texts themselves, the Romans kept a tight lid on alternative interpretations or translations. For centuries, the Latin Bible was the only Bible allowed to be read, and only the priests and Church officials had access to a Latin Bible. The rest of the people among the regions controlled by the Roman Catholic Church and its surrogates had no direct access to scripture.

Common people could only hear its Latin from the priests, who also controlled its literal interpretation. This was the status quo for many centuries until parts of the Bible was (illegally according to the Church) translated into English and other languages. The first complete English Bible - translated from the Latin Bible - came into being during the 14th Century - more than a thousand years after Eusebius' Latin Bible.

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And even then, John Wycliffe, the English Bible's translator, was declared a heretic by the Roman Catholic Church. By the command of the Church and its Pope Martin V, his Biblical texts were ordered to be burnt, and his then-dead body was exhumed and burnt, and his ashes were thrown into a river.

This 'scorched earth' policy of virtually eliminating any and all interpretations of Genesis and other parts of the scriptures outside of those approved by the Church and Roman Empire created a single literal interpretation of the Biblical scriptures throughout all of the Holy Roman Empire for thousands of years. Most of this interpretation is still accepted today by modern sects of Christianity.

The bottom line is these texts, originally passed down orally from one generation to the next by devoted teachers now called Prophets, underwent a cascade of manipulation over the centuries by those who sought to use these texts to maintain power and authority over certain societies.

Meanwhile, the oral teachings traveled history in parallel through a lineage of prophets. These prophets include Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainen, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Elias/Esaias, Gad, and later, Samuel, Jeremy, Jeremiah, Elihu, Moses, Joshua, Balaam, Samuel, Nathan, David, Ahijah, Jahaziel, Elijah, Malachi, Elisha, Job, Joel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Oded, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Haggai, Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi.

We can now also include Tobit and his followers as part of this lineage as well.

Most of these prophets are documented in one way or another among Old Testament texts. But for each of these there are many others. These include Enoch, Zenock, Ezias, Iddo, Jehu, Nathan, Zenos Neum, Shemaiah and many others.

It was this great lineage of teachers that Jesus belonged to, as a devoted student of John the Baptist, who was a devoted student of Zachariah, also a former devoted student within the lineage that included Isaiah, Solomon, David, Samuel, Eli, Joshua, Moses, Jacob, Abraham, Melchizedek and Noah.

This rich oral tradition also meant that the sometimes allegorical lessons of the Torah also accompanied the interpretation of the priest – who pledged their devotion to the Supreme Being. Sometimes the teacher was also the father of the student. This was more the case during earlier times, but was also seen later, as family members were sometimes teachers and students. We can cite Jesus and his brother James, who was a student of Jesus.

We can piece together the nature of this passing of information as we examine some of the student-teacher relationships that existed between Melchizedek and Abraham; Abraham and Lot; Moses and Joshua; Eli and Samuel; Samuel and Saul; Saul and David; David and Solomon and many others. It is also illustrated by Jesus' relationship with his teacher John the Baptist, as well as Jesus' relationships with his own disciples, whom Jesus instructed to also go out and pass on what he taught them to others.

This passing of the teachings of love for God eventually became subjected to territorialism as the Torah was transcribed from Torah Shebe'al Peh to Torah Shebichtav and then translated to Latin and then to other languages over the past few centuries.

The texts of the Torah cannot be isolated from the environment and society of their times. This region was brimming with strife with warfare between feuding empires of Babylonia, Canaan, Rome, Assyria, Judah, Egypt, and surrounding regions. Struggles for land and territory were rampant, and the implication of authority from the Supreme proved to be more than a political necessity: It was an issue of survival.

Then of course we find the Israelites were conquered by the Babylonians and exiled. When the Persians were victorious over the Babylonians they released Israelites, but only after the Israelites provided proof they had a written law in order to govern their people.

In the centuries that followed, territorial struggles continued, and the formation of the Torah gained additional substance with the writings of Ezra in the Fifth Century BCE. After the rebuilding of Jerusalem under the Persian ruler Artaxerxes, Ezra led a formation of a separated assembly of Israelites committed to following Moses' law.

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The successive assemblies following Ezra took a drastic sectarian turn over the next centuries, as priestly struggles merged with struggles for territorial rights, and the assemblies became increasingly political.

The Torah's interpretations continued to be modified over the next five centuries as Israelite high priests formed rigid sectarian order over their assemblies. The rule of law became tantamount and the five books of the Torah were considered the constitution of the Israelite people, and the priests were their governors. That is, until the Romans conquered Jerusalem.

The necessity of a succession of rulers through this period produced political alliances between certain priests and the various kings of Judah. This drove the recognition of the Israelite assembly as a separate race of people and allowed the high priests to become ex-facto governors.

This politically driven succession of high priests became increasingly power-savvy over the centuries, as evidenced by the teachings of Jesus. We find that by the time of Jesus' arrival, the institutional temples and its priesthood had depreciated the importance of the teachings of devotion that had been passed down orally over the centuries from teacher to student.

This was characterized by Jesus, who condemned the nature and hierarchy of the institutional priesthood.

These devotional principles took second fiddle by the politics of necessity, as literal interpretations of the "promised land" and the "chosen people" of Judah and Israel became further misconstrued.

Jesus' teachings identified the two primary orders among the institutional temples - the Sadducees and the Pharisees - as focused upon retaining their politically oriented positions of "teachers of the law" over the passing down of the teachings of devotional Judaism.

Jesus vehemently criticized these two groups as misleading the people and abandoning the original precepts of the teachings of the Torah - which he emphasized were grounded upon the "first and foremost commandment" of Moses to love God.

This teaching, we find from biblical texts, had been passed through a devotional lineage that included John the Baptist and

Zachariah, John's teacher and traced back through the centuries. Many historians have shown that the Essenes – a priestly order that rejected the political ambitions of the mainstream priestly order – were also a vehicle for part of this lineage of teachers.

We find within these histories a repeating lesson: That the teachings of the Supreme Being handed down from teacher to student can at any point in time can become perverted as the burdens of power struggles overwhelm our devotional natures.

History has taught us that even scripture can be subjected to alteration during times of challenge, depending upon the objectives and mission of those institutions that bear the responsibility for carrying those teachings forward into future times.

As a result, we find that out of the thousands of scriptural manuscripts and scrolls passed down for centuries by early Israelite and Christian teachers, only the politically-selected books of the Bible and a limited collection of mostly tattered manuscripts found buried in the desert or hidden within the Church's secret library remain.

However, those books found in the desert – now called the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi texts – provide clear evidence that these institutions systematically eliminated many manuscripts as well as alternative interpretations.

We also find clear evidence that some of the texts that made it into the Latin Bible were manipulated with respect to their translation and inclusion. Yes, inclusion: This means that some texts were removed while some were added.

Then we have creative manipulations, such as placing the Book of Revelation as the last book of the Bible though it was not the last to be written. This was conveniently done because of the last verse of this Book that condemn adding or taking away anything in the Book of Revelation.

Putting this book last in the Bible, however, gives the reader the impression that nothing can thenceforth be added or taken away from the entire Bible – even though the writer of the Book of Revelation was referring solely to the Book of Revelation.

Such slick publishing decisions expose a larger conspiracy to utilize the Bible to control the populace. And this is exactly what occurred in the centuries to come at the hands of the Roman Empire and their surrogate Roman Catholic Church.

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The bottom line is that the canon – the arrangement of the Books of the Bible – and the insertion and depletion of particular verses and words, were orchestrated as part of an overall objective to put forth the impression that Christianity (inclusive of early Judaism) was the original and only valid religious institution.

Unfortunately, these sorts of actions mean the Bible and the Torah have become tainted by politics and the quest for institutional power over the centuries.

This doesn't mean they do not contain the Truth, however.

Over the centuries, a few other Biblical-like texts have surfaced in addition to the Dead Sea Scrolls, including the Greek Septuagint and the Arabic Peshitta. The Septuagint arose through the translation of the Rabbinical texts originally put together by Origen (who was later rejected as heretical by the Church), though its current form has been altered through the centuries.

The Peshitta, which also contained some manuscripts alternative to the Bible, to some degree escaped destruction by the Romans – although it is not clear to what degree or at what stage.

What all this indicates is evidence that the many scriptural mistranslations and misinterpretations have been orchestrated continuously by different sectarian institutions over the centuries. These orchestrations have no relation to each other outside having a common goal of gaining and/or maintaining power over people and societies of their times.

This strategy, common among so many governments of ancient times to the middle ages, has been to utilize what is held dear to most common people – the worship of a Supreme Being.

Since scripture has been held in the highest esteem by devoted societies, it is quite easy for those in positions of power to manipulate those scriptures and the institutions that distribute them in ways that maintain their positions of power.

The historical record clearly indicates a lack of separation between early religious societies and their governments. This has led to kings and tyrants who controlled scriptures for holy purposes or the purposes of retaining power.

This is why, for example, the “kings of Israel” are often confused with the “prophets of Israel.” This makes obvious the lack of separation between religious belief and the government rule.

This separation of church and state doctrine, as it is called today, is a hallmark of Western democracy. This doctrine assumes each of us has a freedom to worship or not worship in any manner we so choose individually, and the government cannot (or should not) dictate that.

This of course reflects the very freedom of worship that God gives each of us. No one can be forced to love God.

Contrasting this, most of the societies of the Judeo-Roman era back to the era of Abraham and the Pharaohs of Egypt were based on the notion that a single person – the Emperor or King – ruled that particular society or territory, and thus represented God. This meant that any religious institution and its leaders had to be authorized or controlled by that particular Emperor or King.

This emperor-feudal system of government had all the hallmarks of no freedom of religious thought. The king or emperor had all the power, and the common people had no power over their choice of religion and manner of worship.

Unfortunately, this type of governmental system (emperor-feudal) maintained power over societies in the Mediterranean, Middle East, Europe and Asia with very few exceptions (such as the Greeks) during the formative years of the texts that were combined to eventually make up the Torah, the Tanakh and the Old Testament inclusive of the Book of Genesis.

Good or bad, this emperor-feudal system of government utilized and enforced those scriptures to create authority and hold onto power.

It is this utilization of forced authority over these scriptures that has produced some of the gross misunderstandings among many of the texts of today’s Bible, including Genesis.

This forced authority continues today, albeit in another form, as various religious institutions enforce the use of certain texts and interpretations on their followers under the threat of excommunication.

Even with the rise of the ‘separation of church and state’ doctrine, these institutions continue to flex their authority through

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the underwriting of particular versions and translations of the scriptures.

Even if people of today's societies have the freedom to accept a particular version of scripture or not, the leaders of these sectarian institutions wield authority through the power to excommunicate followers.

Today instead of imprisonment and/or punishment by death, those who dare to accept a different version and interpretation of the scriptures become ostracized and humiliated in the court of public opinion within these institutions that control religious thought in modern society. They become, in the phraseology of cults, "shunned."

In order to accomplish this enforcement, each Judeo-Christian sect has underwritten particular versions and interpretations among the Biblical or Torah texts.

Many of the strongest Christian sects utilize the remnant authority of the Roman Catholic church and the Holy Roman Empire. This is enforced through the acceptance of the Nicene Creed doctrine originally put forth and forcefully indoctrinated by the early Roman Catholic Church.

Among the Israelite sects we find the narrative and scriptural interpretation mostly controlled by the Orthodox Jewish institution, more loosely followed by secular Jewish institutions of today.

These institutions have become quasi governmental and policing organizations, as they enforce their interpretations upon those who seek the acceptance of their peers and family members who are followers.

It is these structures today that are responsible for the forced authority of those ancient rulers and emperors that utilized scripture to maintain power over the people of their time.

Today's scriptural versions, interpretations and translations serve to maintain the authority of those leaders of individual institutions, who continue to rule over their followers much as the emperors before them utilized scripture to rule over their populaces. The primary difference lies in their means of control and whether they are able to utilize violence to enforce their authority over their followers.

Despite this, the fact that these texts survived in some form through all those political efforts is a testament to the Supreme Being's ability to ultimately provide us with a source of spiritual information, even while shrouding its true meaning from those that wish to abuse it.

This of course has provided the purpose and the mission for those who over the centuries who have worked to counter the misinterpretation and abuse of scriptural texts.

This also gives testament to the undercurrent of confidential knowledge that has continued to quietly be passed from serious teacher to serious student through the centuries, insulated from the abuses and misinterpretations by the various emperors and religious leaders through their surrogate clergies.

This is "confidential" not because the information is secret. It is confidential because it is understood only by those who are serious about learning the real lessons of spiritual life, and by those willing to pass those lessons on to the next generation.

This is not a new concept. We can see the importance of spiritual mentorship throughout the centuries. We find even during times when religious thought was controlled by emperors and tyrants that some were willing to risk their lives to understand the Truth and pass that Truth on to the next generation.

This is of course one of the true lessons of the Old and New Testaments - the testaments of so many who stood up to the enforcers who controlled the status quo.

It is this backbone of courage that provides lessons behind those who were persecuted for their teachings by those kings and emperors who dominated their eras. These include prophets such as Elijah, Zechariah, Micaiah, Amos, Hanani, Uriah, Joseph, John the Baptist, Jesus, James, Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Philip and so many others through modern times.

Together with those who followed Jesus, this lineage of prophets and teachers has continued to pass on the teachings of devotion to the Supreme Being, often despite the forces of institutions and tyrants of their times.

The translation of these 'alternate' books of the Bible gives the reader an opportunity to better understand the devotional context of these early teachings handed down orally from teacher to teacher through the generations. Such a path reveals the devotional nature of the teachings passed between these

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great teachers - describing a loving, omniscient and generous Supreme Being.

The Book of Tobit Chapter One

1:1. These are the teachings Tobit
the follower of Tobiel
the follower of Ananiel
the follower of Aduel
the follower of Gabael
a follower of Asael
from the congregation of Nephthali.

1:2. During the time of Enemessar
the king of the Assyrians
he was led captive
out from Thisbe
nearby the village
called Nephthali in Galilee
north of Aser.

1:3. I Tobit have walked
all the days of my life
in the ways of truth and justice
aided my brothers
and my people
who followed me to Nineveh
into the land of the Assyrians.

1:4. Now when I was
in my own country
in the land of Israel
when I was young
all the followers
of my teacher Nephthali
fell from the temple
chosen by followers of Israel
so all the other followers
would make offerings there
where the temple
honoring the most High
was consecrated

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and built for eternity.

1:5. Now all the followers
had together revolted.
And the followers
of the teacher Nephthali
made offerings to the idol Baal.

1:6. But I alone went often
to Jerusalem for the festivals
as ordained for followers of Israel
by an eternal decree
to make offerings
of first fruits and ten percents.
In increasing amounts
I offered these
at the altar of the priests
the followers of Aaron.

1:7. I gave a ten percent tithing
to the followers of Aaron
who ministered at Jerusalem.
I gave away another ten percent
each year in Jerusalem.

1:8. Then a third tithing I gave
to those I was obligated to
just as Debora my father's mother
had instructed me
due to being orphaned
by my father.

1:9. Then when I came of age
and became a man
I married Anna whom I loved
and from her I brought forth Tobias.

1:10. Then when we brought

our belongings to Nineve
all my brothers
and those from my family
ate the food of the atheists.

1:11. Yet I myself did not eat.

1:12. Because I remembered God
with all my heart.

1:13. Now the most High
had been merciful to me
and honored me before Enemessar
so that I became his purveyor.

1:14. So I traveled to Media
and left with Gabael
and gave ten talents of silver
to the brother of Gabrias
at the village of Rages.

1:15. Once Enemessar had died
his follower Sennacherib
reigned in his stead
but his house had trouble
so I did not go into Media.

1:16 Then during the days of Enemessar
I gave alms to many
of my brothers
and gave food
to those who hungered.

1:17. I gave clothing
to those who were needy
and if I saw any people dead
or thrown off the walls of Nineve
I buried them.

1:18. So if king Sennacherib

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had killed anyone who arrived
after fleeing from Judea
I buried them privately
because as in his wrath
he had killed many
and many bodies were not found
when they were looked for
on behalf of the king.

1:19. Once one of the Ninevites
went to complain of me to the king
that I buried someone
and then hid them.
Knowing I was sought out
to be murdered
I withdrew in fear.

1:20. Then all my possessions were taken
and I had no possessions
except my wife Anna
and my son Tobias.

1:21. After 55 days had passed
two of his followers killed him
and they fled
to the Ararath mountains
and his son Sarchedonus
reigned in his stead.
He governed his father's matters
and all of his affairs
including my brother Achiacharus
and my brother Anael's son.

1:22. After being invited by Achiacharus
I returned to Nineve.
Achiacharus was the cupbearer
and the keeper of the signet
and oversaw many matters

after being appointed by Sarchedonus.
He was my brother's son.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Two

2:1. When I returned home
my wife Anna was returned to me
together with my son Tobias
at the feast of Pentecost
the holy seven week feast.
A nice dinner was prepared
and I sat down to eat.

2:2. When I saw the abundance of food
I told my son
to give to whatever poor man
you find among our brothers
being mindful of the Lord
and then carry it to him.

2:3. When he returned he said:
Father I found one of our people
he was beaten up
and thrown out of the town square.

2:4. Before I ate anything
I got up and took him to his room
until the sun went down.

2:5. When I returned
I washed myself
and ate my food in sorrow.

2:6. Remembering Amos' teachings he said:
Your feasts will turn into mourning
and all your mirth will become lamentation.

2:7. Then I wept.
As the sun went down.

I dug a grave
and I buried his body.

2:8. Yet my neighbors mocked me saying:
This man is not afraid
to be put to death for this
He ran away
and then he buried
the dead once again.

2:9. That same night
when I returned from the burial
I slept by the wall
within my courtyard.
I felt tarnished
and felt exposed.

2:10. I didn't know
there were sparrows in the wall.
As my eyes were open
the sparrows pooped
right into my eyes
and my eyes were covered
over with whiteness.
I went to the physicians
but they couldn't help me.
Thankfully Achiacharus fed me
until I arrived in Elymais.

2:11. Then Anna my wife
began doing her work.

2:12. When she finished the work
the owners paid her wage
and then handed her a goat.

2:13. Then when she came home
she began to cry.
I asked her:
Where did this goat come from?

Was it not stolen?
Because it is not lawful
to eat something that is stolen.

2:14. But she replied to me:
It was given as a gift
and is more than wages.
But I did not believe her
but asked her to ask the owners
and was upset with her.
But she answered me:
What about your charity
and your righteous deeds?
And consider your works.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Three

3:1. I was concerned and wept
and in my sadness I prayed:

3:2. O Lord, you are righteous
and all Your deeds
and all Your ways
are merciful and pure
and You are the true
and just judge for eternity.

3:3. Please remember me
and watch over me
and forgive me
for my errors and ignorance
and the errors of my fathers
who have erred before You.

3:4 For they did not
follow Your instructions
so this has damaged us

and imprisoned us to die
all for the wisdom of reproach
among all the people
among whom we are spread.

3:5. And yet Your judgments
are pure and justified
against me according
to my errors and my fathers'
because we did not follow
Your instructions
nor have we walked
in truth before You.

3:6. So therefore be just to me
and take my spirit
away from my body
so my presence here will dissolve
and my body will become earth.
Because it is better
to die than to live
for I have heard many lies
and have much sorrow.
Therefore instruct me
so that I might be delivered
from this distress
and go to the eternal place.
Please don't turn away from me.

3:7. Then the same day
in the village of Ecbatane
in of region of Sara
the daughter of Raguel
was also shamed
by her father's maids.

3:8. For she had married
a total of seven husbands
and they were killed by Asmodeus
who had a wicked spirit

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before they slept with her.
Did you not know they said?
That he strangled your husbands?
You had seven husbands
but you were not given
any of their names.

3:9. Why would you beat us
because of them?
If they are dead
then go your own way
and not let us see you
or your son or daughter.

3:10. When she heard these things
she was very sad
so she thought about suicide.
But then she said:
I am the only daughter
of my father.
If I do this
it will only bring him shame
and I will carry his sadness
with me into the grave.

3:11. Then she prayed
leaning into a window:
O Lord my God
You are sacred
and Your holy and glorious Name
is sacred and praised forever.
May all Your deeds
be praised for eternity.

3:12. Now, O Lord, I focus my eyes
and turn toward thee.

3:13. And I ask:

Remove me from this earth
so I may no longer hear
of this shame.

3:14. Surely Lord you know
that I am not wicked to humans.

3:15. And that I never corrupted
my name nor my father's name
within the land I captured.
I am my father's only daughter
he had no other children
nor other family members
nor any son born to him
who could have married
someone like me.
But my seven husbands
have already died
so why should I live?
If this doesn't please You
then I should die.
Give me some instructions
and take pity on me
so that I will feel no more shame.

3:16. Thus both their prayers were heard
by the majesty of the Supreme Being.

3:17. Then Raphael was sent
to heal them both
and to cleanse Tobit's eyes
and give Sara the daughter of Raguel
as a wife to Tobias
the son of Tobit
and to bind Asmodeus
who was a wicked spirit
because she belonged to Tobias
by right of inheritance.
During this time Tobit returned
and entered into his house

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then Sara the daughter of Raguel
came down from her upstairs room.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Four

4:1. On that day Tobit remembered
the money he owed to Gabael
in Rages of Media.

4:2. So he said to himself:
I did wish for death
but should I not call
for my son Tobias
so I can leave him
the money before I die?

4:3. Then he called him, saying:
My son, when my body is dead
bury it in the ground
and don't despise your honor
but honor her
for the rest of your life
and do what pleases her
and don't give her sorrow.

4:4. Remember my son
that she protected you
when you were in her womb
so when her body is dead
bury her beside me in one grave.

4:5. Dear son
be mindful of the Lord our God
for all your days
and don't let your will become wicked
or ignore His instructions.
Be righteous throughout your life
and don't follow the ways of unrighteousness.

4:6. For if thou deal with honesty
your deeds will prosper
and you will be met with success

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just as all who live justly will be.

4:7. Give charitably from your heart
and when you give charitably
let your heart not become envious
nor turn your face from the poor
or the face of God shall turn from you.

4:8. Give abundantly to charity
but give accordingly.
If you have just a little
don't be afraid of giving just a little.

4:9. For you will stow away a treasure
for you, Tobit, for a time of necessity.

4:10. Because that charity will deliver
you from your death
and prevent you from darkness.

4:11. For charity is kindness
for all that give it
in the eyes of the most High.

4:12. Be wary of prostitutes my son
it is best to take a wife
who is a follower of your teachers.
It is best not to take a strange woman
who is not from your teacher's congregation
for we are the followers of the prophets
Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
Remember, my son
that from the beginning our teachers
all married wives of their congregations
and were blessed by their followers
and these followers
shall inherit the land.

4:13. So my son
love your brothers
and don't despise your brothers
the sons and daughters
of your people
by not taking a wife of them.
For pride is destruction
and a great trouble
and perversion is spoiled
when desired
for perversion is the mother of famine.

4:14. Don't allow the works of any man
which has affected you
take hold of you.
But give to him from your hand
for if you serve God
you will receive blessings.
Be wise my son
in all things you do
and be wise with your words.

4:15. Don't do to anyone
what you don't want done to you.
Don't drink wine to make you drunk.
And don't let drunkenness
travel with you on your journey.

4:16. Give of your bread to the hungry
and of your garments to the unclothed
and according to your abundance give charity
and let not your heart become envious
when you give your charity.

4:17. Give out your bread
at the burial of the just
but not of the wicked.

4:18. Ask counsel from those
who are wise

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and despise not the counsel
that is rewarding.

4:19. Praise the Lord
your God always
and ask Him to direct your ways
so all your ways
and your wisdom will prosper.
For not every nation has counsel
because the Lord himself gives
every good thing
and He humbles whom He will
and when He will.
Therefore my son,
remember my instructions
and don't forget them.

4:20. So now I attest this
to those I promised ten talents:
to Gabael the son of Gabrias
at Rages in Media.

4:21. So don't be afraid my son
that we will become poor.
For you have much wealth
if you revere God
and depart from all wickedness
and do what is pleasing to Him.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Five

5:1. Tobias replied and said:
Father, I will do everything
you have instructed me.

5:2. But how can I receive this money
since I don't know him.

5:3. Then Tobin wrote instructions
that told him:
Find a man to travel with you
while I am still alive
and I will pay the money
so you can pay him
to go with you.

5:4. Then he left to find this man.
He found Raphael the angel.

5:5. But he didn't recognize him
and he told him:
Can you travel with me to Rages?
Do you know where this is?

5:6. The angel answered him:
I will go with you
and I know the way well
for I have stayed there
with our brother Gabael.

5:7. Then Tobias said to him:
Wait for me
until I tell my father.

5:8. Then the angel told him:
Hurry up and do it.
So he went to his father and said:
Behold, I have found someone

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who will go with me.
Tobin responded:
Bring him to me
so I can know which tribe
he comes from
and whether he is trustworthy
enough to go with you

5:9. So he called him
and the angel came inside
and they greeted each other.

5:10. Then Tobit asked him:
Brother, can you tell me which tribe
and which family you are from?

5:11. The angel replied to him:
Are you wanting a certain tribe or family
or an hired man travel with your son?
Then Tobit replied to him:
Brother I would recognize
your family and name.

5:12. Then the angel said:
I am Azarias
the son of Ananias the great
and one of your brothers.

5:13. Then Tobit said to him:
You are welcome, brother.
Please don't be angry with me
because I asked about
your tribe and your family.
You are surely my brother
from an honest and good stock
as I know Ananias and Jonathas
sons of that great Samaias
because we went together to Jerusalem

so we could worship
and make offerings
and give tenths of the fruits.
They weren't attracted to the error
of our brothers.
But you my brother
have a good foundation.

5:14. But how much
shall I pay you?
What about a drachm a day
along with other necessities
like I do with my own son?

5:15. Surely if you return safely
I will add something more
to your payment.

5:16. Thus they were all pleased.
Then he said to Tobias:
Prepare yourself for the journey.
May God go with you.
And when his son prepared
everything for the journey
his father told him:
Go with this man
and may God
Who dwells in the sanctuary
bless you on your journey
and may the angel of God
keep you company.
So they both began their trip
together with the young man's dog.

5:17. But his mother Anna wept
and said to Tobit:
Why have you sent our son away?
Is he not the staff of our hand
who goes out and represents us?

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5:18. Don't be greedy
to add money to money
instead let it be used
to raise and feed our children.

5:19. For what the Almighty
has given us to live on
will suffice for us.

5:20. Then Tobit said to her:
Do no worry dear lady
he will return safely
and you will lay your eyes on him again.

5:21. For the good angel
will keep him company
and his journey will be successful
and he will return safely.

5:22. So she stopped weeping.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Six

6:1. They went on their way
and arrived in the evening
at the river Tigris
and they lodged there.

6:2. Then the young man
went to the river to wash
and a fish leaped out of the river
and nearly devoured him.

6:3. Then the angel said to him:
Grab the fish.
So the young man grabbed the fish
and pulled it to shore.

6:4. Then the angel said:
Open up the fish
and remove the heart
and the liver and gall
and store them safely.

6:5. So the young man did this
just as the angel instructed him.
Then after they roasted the fish
they did eat it
then they both continued their traveling
until they came near Ecbatane.

6:6. Then the young man asked the angel:
Brother Azarias what use is the heart
and the liver and gall of the fish?

6:7. So he told him:
Touching the heart
and the liver
may disturb some wicked spirit.
So we must roast it

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before it is offered
to prevent any disturbance.

6:8. As for the gall
it can be used as an ointment
for someone that is blind
to help him heal.

6:9. Then they approached Rages.

6:10. And the angel said to the young man:
Brother let's lodge with Raguel
who is your cousin.
He also has an only daughter
who is named Sara.
I will look into whether
she can be given to you as a wife.

6:11. Because for you
she would be appropriate
given that she is also from your tribe.

6:12. And this maiden is fair and wise.
So therefore listen to me:
I will speak to her father
and when we return from Rages
we can celebrate the marriage.
Because I know that Raguel
cannot marry her to someone else
according to the law of Moses.
If so he will be dangerous
because the right inheritance
does apply to you
more than anyone else.

6:13. The young man answered the angel:
I have heard, brother Azarias
that this maiden has been given away

to seven men so far
who all died in the marriage chamber.

6:14. At this point I am
the only son of my father
and I worry should I go with her
I will die as those others before me
because a wicked spirit must love her.
They don't hurt anybody
except those who went with her.
So therefore I worry that I may die
and will bring my father and mother with me
because they will be too saddened
as they have no other son
who will bury them.

6:15. Then the angel said to him:
Don't you remember the instructions
that your father gave to you
that you should marry a wife
who is from your own tribe?
So therefore hear me out
O my brother
for she shall be given to you to marry
and don't worry about the wicked spirit
for tonight she will be given to you to marry.

6:16. And when you go to the wedding bedroom
you will take the essences of perfume
together with the gall
and it will create a smoke.

6:17. This will chase away the wicked
who will never return
but when you come together with her
rise up both of you
and pray to merciful God
who will have compassion for you
and save you.
Don't worry

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for she has been selected for you
from the very beginning
and you will keep her
and she will go with you.
She will also bear three children.
Now when Tobias heard these things
he came to love her
and his heart became
affectionately joined to her.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Seven

7:1. When they approached Ecbatane
they came to the house of Raguel
and there Sara met them.
After they greeted each other
she invited them into the house.

7:2. Then Raguel said to Edna his wife:
Look how this young man
Tobit likes my cousin!

7:3, Then Raguel asked them:
Where are you brothers coming from?
They answered him:
We are the followers of Nephthalim
who are now captives in Nineve.

7:4. Then he asked them:
Do you know our relative Tobit?
They responded to him:
Yes, we know him.
Then he asked:
Is he in good health?

7:5. Then they replied:
Yes, he is alive and in good health.
Then Tobias told him:
He is my father.

7:6. Raguel jumped up
and kissed him
then he wept.

7:7. Then he praised him and said to him:
You are the son
of an honest and good man.
But when he heard Tobit was blind
he was sorrowful and wept.

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7:8. His wife Edna and daughter Sara also wept.
Then they entertained them cheerfully
and after collecting food to offer
they prepared a meal for the table.
Then Tobias said to Raphael:
Brother Azarias, speak to us
about your journey
and what you are seeking to accomplish.

7:9. So he spoke with Raguel on this
and Raguel said to Tobias:
Now eat and drink
and be satisfied.

7:10. For it would be fortunate
if you could marry my daughter.
But I need to tell you something truthfully:

7:11. I have given my daughter in marriage
to seven different men
each of whom died
the very night they were joined with her.
But for now just relax.
Tobias then said:
I won't be eating here
until we have an agreement between us.

7:12. Raguel said to them:
Then take her from here
as you wish
for you are her cousin
and she will be yours
and the merciful God
will bring you good fortune in all things.

7:13. Then he summoned his daughter Sara
and she came to her father

and he clasp her hand
and gave her to Tobias
as his wife, and said:
Okay you can take her
under the law of Moses
and bring her to your father.
Then he blessed them.

7:14. Then he called his wife Edna
and he wrote up a promise to his wife
and then folded the paper and sealed it.

7:15. Then they started eating.

7:16. Then Raguel called his wife Edna
and told her:
Please prepare another bedroom
and take her in there.

7:17. Once she did what he asked her
she brought her there
and then she wept
and wiped the tears of her daughter
and said to her:

7:18. Be in good spirits daughter.
The Lord of heaven and earth
will bring you joy
even in your sorrow.
Be in good spirits my daughter.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Eight

8:1. After they ate
they brought Tobias in
to meet her.

8:2. And as he arrived
he remembered what Raphael said
and brought perfume essences
and mixed them with gall
and made an incense with it.

8:3. Then the wicked spirit
smelled the fragrance
and fled to the end of Egypt
where the angel tied him up.

8:4. Then they were joined
and spent time inside the room.
Tobias rose from the bed
and said to her:
My lady, get up and let's pray
that God will have mercy on us.

8:5. Then Tobias prayed:
Praise be to You
O God of our teachers
praise be to Your holy and glorious Name.
Eternally let the heavens praise You
and all Your creation.

8:6. You created Adam
and gave him his wife Eve.
She was his partner
and after them emerged humanity.
You have said that it is not good
for humans to be alone

so let us make for him
a partner like himself.

8:7. So now, O Lord
I don't take this lady for my desire
but rather to gain righteousness.
Therefore grant us the mercy
so that we may become old together.

8:8. Then she said together with him: Amen.

8:9. So they slept together that night.
Then Raguel arose
and went out and dug a grave.

8:10. And he said:
I am afraid that he may also be dead.

8:11. But then Raguel returned
and went into his house.

8:12. He then said to his wife Edna:
Summon one of the maids
and have her check
to see if he's alive.
If he is not
then we should bury him
and no one will know about it.

8:13. So the maid opened the door
and went inside
and found them both asleep.

8:14. Then she returned
and told them he was alive.

8:15. Then Raguel praised God
and prayed:
O God, You are worthy of praises
by all who are pure and holy.

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Therefore let Your saints
and all your creation
praise You.
And let all Your angels
praise You for eternity.

8:16. You are to be praised
for You have made me happy
and I was not expecting that
but You have dealt with us
according to Your great compassion.

8:17. You are to be praised
because you have compassion
for two only begotten children
of their fathers.
Grant them mercy, O Lord
and give them health in life
together with joy and compassion.

8:18. Then Raguel instructed his servants
to fill the grave.

8:19. Then he kept the wedding feast
going for fourteen days.

8:20. But before the wedding ended
Raguel had promised him
that he shouldn't leave
until the 14 days had passed
so he should not depart
before the 14 wedding days.

8:21. And that he should
get half of his things
and go to his father for safety.
Then he can rest
when my wife and I are dead.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Nine

9:1. Then Tobias summoned Raphael
and he told him:

9:2. Brother Azarias please bring with you
a servant and two camels
and travel to Rages of Media
to visit with Gabael
and bring him the money
and take him to the wedding.

9:3. Because Raguel has promised
that I will not leave.

9:4. Yet my father counts the days
and if I take too long
he will be saddened.

9:5 So Raphael left
and stayed the night with Gabael
and gave him the writings
and brought him some bags
that were sealed
and gave them to him.

9:6. Then early in the morning
they both left together
and arrived at the wedding
and Tobias married his wife.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Ten

10:1. Now his father Tobit
had counted every day
and when the journey's
expected timeline had passed
and they did not arrive

10:2. Tobit then asked:
Have they been arrested?
or is Gabael dead
and there is no one
that will give him money?

10:3. Thus he was very worried.

10:4. Then his wife said to him:
My son has died.
Because he hadn't returned
she began to cry for him, saying:

10:5. Now I don't care for anything
my dear son
since I have let you go
the light of my eyes.

10:6. Tobit replied and said:
Hold your peace
do not worry
for he is safe.

10:7. But then she said:
Hold your peace
and don't deceive me.
My son is dead.
Then she went out every day
onto the path they traveled
and fasted during the day
and cried during the nights

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as she mourned her son Tobias
throughout the 14 days of the wedding
that Raguel promised he would stay.
Then Tobias said to Raguel:
Let me take leave
as my father and my mother
don't have to keep looking for me.

10:8. But his father in law said to him:
Wait just a little bit
and I will summon your father
and they will tell him
how all is well with you.

10:9. But Tobias told him:
No, let me go to my father.

10:10. Then Raguel got up
and gave him Sara his wife
and half of his possessions
servants, herds and money.

10:11. And he blessed them
then he sent them away saying:
May the God of heaven
give you a prosperous journey
my children.

10:12. Then he told his daughter:
Honor your father
and your mother in-law
which are now your parents
so I may hear good things.
Then he kissed her.
Edna then said to Tobias:
May the Lord of heaven
restore you my dear brother
and grant that I may see your children

of my daughter Sara
before this body dies
so I may rejoice before the Lord.
Look, I will give my daughter
to you with a special trust
to keep her away from wickedness.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Eleven

11:1. After all this happened
Tobias left on his travels
praising God to give him
a prosperous journey.
He honored Raguel and Edna his wife
and traveled until nearing Nineve.

11:2. Then Raphael told Tobias:
Do you realize dear brother
that you left your father?

11:3. So hurry back to your wife
so she can prepare the home.

11:4. And bring with you the ointment.
So they left to travel there
and the dog followed after them.

11:5. Now Anna sat waiting
for her son to arrive.

11:6. But when she saw him coming
she told his father:
Look, my son is coming
and the man ran out to greet him.

11:7. Then Raphael said to Tobias:
I know your father wants to see you.

11:8. So anoint his eyes with the ointment
and after rubbing it in
the whiteness will disappear
and he will be able to see you.

11:9. So Anna ran outside

and hugged her son tightly
and said to him:
Finally I am seeing you my son
so now I am content to die.
And they both wept.

11:10. Tobit also went towards the door
but he stumbled
and his son ran up to him

11:11. He grabbed hold of his father
and he rubbed the ointment
on his fathers' eyes and said:
Be hopeful my father.

11:12. And when his eyes began to sting
he rubbed them.

11:13. Then the whiteness fell away
from the corners of his eyes.
And when he saw his son
he hugged him tightly.

11:14. Then he wept and prayed:
Praised be to you O God
and may Your Name be praised forever
and praise be to all Your holy angels.

11:15. For You have suffered me
and have had mercy on me
for now I can see my son Tobias.
Then his son arrived rejoicing
and told his father about the wonderful things
that had happened to him in Media.

11:16. Then Tobit left to meet his daughter in law
at the gate of Nineve.
He rejoiced and praised God
and those who saw him marvelled
because he was able to see again.

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11:17. But Tobias gave thanks to them
because God was merciful to him.
And when he approached his daughter in law Sara
he honored her and said:
You are welcome here daughter.
Praise God who brought you to us
and may your father and mother be honored.
Then there was joy
among all of his brothers
who were there at Nineve.

11:18. Then Achiacharus and Nasbas
who was his brother's son
also arrived.

11:19. After this Tobias' wedding continued
joyously for seven days.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Twelve

12:1. Later Tobit summoned his son Tobias
and said to him:

My son, make sure the man
who went with you
was paid his salary.
And please pay him extra.

12:2. So Tobias replied:
O father, I can afford
to give him half
of all I brought back.

12:3. For he has brought me back
to you safely.
He has taken care of my wife
and gave me money
and healed you as well.

12:4. So the elderly man told him:
That is fair to him.

12:5. So he summoned the angel
and he said to him:
Take half of all everything
we have brought back
and you can safely take leave.

12:6. The angel responded to them both, saying:
Praise be to God, for He is magnificent.
Praise Him for those things
He has done for you
as witnessed by everyone around.
We are honored to praise God
and exalt His Name
and we are honored to put forth
our service to God.
Therefore we won't hesitate to praise Him.

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12:7. It may be good
to keep the confidence of a king.
But it is greater
to praise the works of God.
Do that which is greater
and wickedness will not touch you.

12:8. Prayer is good
with fasting and charity
in righteousness.
A little done with righteousness
is better than a lot done
with unrighteousness.
It is better to give charity
than to store away gold.

12:9. Because charity can
deliver one from death
and cleanse one from wickedness.
Those who give charity
will have their righteousness
filled with life.

12:10. But those who are wicked
become their own enemies in their life.

12:11. Certainly I hid nothing from you.
For I told you that it was good
but it is greater
to praise the works of God.

12:12. Now when you wanted
Sara to become your daughter in law
I reminded you to pray to the Holy One.
And when you buried your dead
I was with also with you.

12:13, And when you didn't delay
to get up and leave your dinner
and bury the dead
your good deed was not hidden from me
and I was with you.

12:14. And now God has sent me
to heal you
and Sara your daughter in law.

12:15. I am Raphael
one of the seven holy angels
which present the prayers of the saints
and enter before the glory of the Holy One.

12:16. Then both of them were awed
and bowed down to the ground
in their reverence.

12:17. But he told them:
Do not worry
for all will go well for you
and therefore praise God.

12:18. For due not to any favor from me
but by the will of our God
did I come here.
Therefore praise Him
in all your days.

12:19. All this time was I with you
yet I never ate or drank
and still you saw this vision.

12:20. So therefore give thanks to God
as I will return to Him who sent me
but now write all these things
which have been done
into a book.

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12:21. Then he rose up
and they saw him no more.

12:22. And they praised
the great and wonderful works of God
and how the angel of the Lord
had appeared before them.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Thirteen

13:1 Then Tobit wrote
a prayer of rejoicing that said:
Praise be to God
Who lives forever
and praise be to His sanctuary.

13:2. For He sees suffering
and has compassion.
He goes down to hell
and brings us up again.
Nor is there any one
who will refuse His hand.

13:3. Praise Him to the atheists
you students of Israel.
For He has scattered us among them.

13:4. Declare His greatness there
and extol Him to all who live.
For He is our Master
and He is God
our Father forever.

13:5. And He will suffer us
for our wicked activities
and will have compassion again
and will bring us from all societies
from whom He had scattered us.

13:6. If you turn to Him
with all of your heart
and with all your mind
and deal honestly with Him
then He will also turn to you
and will not hide His face from you.
Consider how He deals with you
and praise Him with all your voice.

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Praise the Mighty Lord
and extol the eternal King.
In the land of my captivity
I did praise Him
and declared His might
and majesty to a wicked people.
Oh you wicked ones
turn to Him
and do right before Him.
If you do, will He not accept you
and have mercy on you?

13:7. I will extol my God
and my soul shall praise the King of heaven
and shall rejoice His greatness.

13:8. Let everyone praise Him
for His righteousness.

13:9. O holy city Jerusalem
He will suffer you
for your people's deeds
and will have compassion
for the followers of the righteous.

13:10. Praise be to the Lord
for He is honorable
praise the eternal King
so His temple may be built
once again with joy
and let Him bring happiness
to those who are captives
and Your love for those who suffer.

13:11. Many people travel far and wide
in the name of the Lord God
with gifts in their hands
even gifts to the King of heaven.

Every generation will praise You
with great joy.

13:12. Doomed are those who hate You
and eternally blessed
are those who love You.

13:13. Rejoice and be happy
for those who follow the just
for they shall come together
and shall praise the Lord of the just.

13:14. Those who love You
are surely blessed
for they shall rejoice in Your peace.
Blessed are those who are sorry
for what You have suffered
for they shall rejoice for You.
When they come to see Your glory
they shall be happy forever.

13:15. Let my soul
praise God the great King.

13:16. For Jerusalem will be restored
with sapphires and emeralds
and precious stone
and Your walls and towers
and battlements with pure gold.

13:17. Then the streets of Jerusalem
shall be paved with beryl and carbuncle
and stones of Ophir.

13:18. And all her streets shall say:
Halleluiah praise God.
Praised be to God
Who is exalted forever.

The Book of Tobit Chapter Fourteen

14:1. Tobit completed praising God.

14:2. He was 58 years old
when he lost his sight
which was restored to him
after another eight years.
So he gave in charity
and his reverence for God increased
as he praised Him.

14:3. Then when he was older
he summoned his son
and the followers of his son
and said to him:
My son, fetch your followers
because I am old
and ready to depart
from this life.

14:4. Go to Media my son
for I surely believe
those things that Jonas the prophet
spoke about Nineve
about it being overthrown
and that peace shall be in Media
for a period of time
and that our brothers
will lie buried in the earth
within that good land.
And Jerusalem will be abandoned
along with the temple of God
inside it will be burned
and will be abandoned for some time.

14:5. But again God will have mercy on them

and will bring them again into the land
where they shall rebuild the temple
but not like the first
until it is fulfilled in time.
Then afterward they will return
from all the places of their captivity
and will gloriously restore Jerusalem.
Then the temple of God
will be built within it
forever as a glorious building
just as the prophets spoke of.

14:6. Then people will have a change of heart
and will truly revere Lord God
and bury their idols.

14:7. May all people praise the Lord
and may His followers confess God
and the Almighty will lift up His followers.
Everyone who truly loves the Lord God
shall rejoice with righteousness
and show mercy to our brothers.

14:8. So now my son
take leave from Nineve
because those things spoken of
by the prophet Jonas
shall surely come to pass.

14:9. But keep the teachings
and the instructions
and have mercy and honesty
and this will be your reward.

14:10. But bury me decently
and your mother with me.
But don't hesitate regarding Nineve.
Remember my son
how Aman handled Achiacharus
who raised him

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and how he brought him
from light into darkness
and how he rewarded him again.
Yet Achiacharus was saved
but the other had his reward:
Because he went into darkness.
Manasses gave in charity
and escaped the snares of death
which they had set for him.
But Aman fell into the snare
and then perished.

14:11. So therefore, my son
consider the purpose of charity
and how righteousness does deliver.
After saying these things
his spirit left while in the bed
being 158 years old.
Tobias buried his body with honor.

14:12. Then when his mother Anna died
he buried her body with his father's.
Then Tobias departed with his wife
and their children to Ecbatane
to Raguel his father in law.

14:13. When Tobias was elderly
he buried his father and mother in law
and inherited their estate
along with his father Tobit's.

14:14. Then he died at Ecbatane in Media
when he was 127 years old.

14:15 But before his body died
he heard of the destruction of Nineve
after it was overtaken
by Nabuchodonosor and Assuerus.

So before his death
he prayed for Nineve.

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